

# THE FIREMAN'S JOURNAL AND MILITARY GAZETTE.

VOL. II—NO. 9.

SAN FRANCISCO, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1885.

WHOLE NO. 35.

PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY  
BY CHASE, BORDICK & CO.  
Corner of Clay & Kearny Streets, over the Post Office.  
CHAS. B. CHASE, MANAGER. BORDICK, J. P. PIERSON.

TERMS, FIFTY CENTS PER MONTH.

THE FIREMAN'S JOURNAL AND MILITARY GAZETTE is published every Saturday morning, and served to City Subscribers at Fifty Cents per month, payable to the Editor. It will also be mailed for six months for \$3.00, or \$5.00 yearly, payable in advance. All communications, connected with the editorial department, to be addressed to the editor, post paid, on business to the Publisher.

Notwithstanding whatever will be given to anonymous communications. Any person wishing articles published in the "Journal" must accompany them with the name of the author. Advertisements will be inserted at the lowest rates. All descriptions of Job Printing attended to promptly.

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## THE NEWS BOYS AT THE "NASSAU" COFFEE HOUSE.

From the New York Sunday Dispatch.

A celebrated writer of the present day, with his usual comprehensiveness and acuteness of mind, has said that the elements of history, the materials which are most interesting to the reader, and which will be found most instructive to posterity—the valuable parts constituting the philosophy of history—are to be met with, not among the bales of State papers and Parliamentary documents—the details of wars and treaties—but in the crowd of the exchange and the domestic hearth. The future history of New York, who will have to detail the occurrences of the present time, if he be merely the Baswell of State transactions, and of the complex society, formed of such discordant party materials as exist in the great social system, independent of the various organizations hidden beneath, will but have performed a task wearisome to the reader, and a work which will be laid aside for the more entertaining fiction, which enlarges while it gives us the diversity of morals, and the shades of national character.

To accomplish these things, we should know, not merely the court, camp and senate, we should also become acquainted with the people. The details which give a charm to the historical novel, No peculiarity of manner, old age or characterized anecdote should be too trivial for notice—nothing that marks the progress of intellect.

There are many events which the chronicler omits in contemporary history as irrelevant, and beneath the dignity of storied record, which are really valuable, and often characteristic of an important epoch.

The Newsboys of New York, to the student of nature and character, who can nicely discriminate, are an interesting class. The lights and shades of manner they exhibit, and even their oddities of character, have an importance in local history which should not be omitted in a picture of the age. A knowledge of those phases of character may be had by an evening's visit to their Lodging House, in the San Francisco, or to their favorite Coffee House—the "Nassau."

The Nassau dining saloon, or rather supper room, for it is closed against guests till the "curfew tolls the knell of parting day," is a cheerful and comfortable looking place. The host has that genuine affability of manner which is conventional to inn keepers. The Newsboy finds himself more at home than Gil Blas in the domicile of the obsequious Boniface who fleeced the greenhorn of Santillana so unmercifully—and the host of the "Nassau" is as great a favorite as his coffee house. When a Newsboy has been unfortunate in the sale of papers, when he is what he calls "short," he has still a place at the table of the "Nassau," his coffee and coffee and plate of beef steak. The landlord, who is also an artist of no mean capacity, is engaged in painting a scene on the sliding door of the dormitory, at the Lodging House, which has secured the good will of his guests.

The Nassau Coffee House, comparing small things with great, is to the New York Newsboys, what Will's coffee house was to the Will Henscombs and Roger de Coverleys of Addison's time. Here they discuss music and the drama—Villikens and his Dinah, and the "Great O'Neill," the Chatham theatre. The meeting in the Park, the Maine law display at the Tabernacle, the politics of Tammany Hall, the babel of parties, and the siege of Sebastopol are debated in stumpy orator style, as well perhaps, as were the exploits of Prince Eugene and the Duke of Marlborough at Will's by the play-house wits and politicians.

We are told in Prior's biography that the poet kept company with drunken soldiers and fiddlers in a low tavern, to study character more acutely, that Charles Dickens dined with the cyprins in their fish-kens at the Five Points. The Spectator found material for his best papers in the coffee houses of London; and the Newsboys afford at the Nassau a far greater diversity of manners, a more instructive and interesting study, than the Templars of the Inns of court, or the "bawdy" haunts of Vice so prominently pictured in the writings of Reynolds and Eugene Sue.

As we were about to enter the Nassau we met a precocious faced Newsboy nicknamed the Professor, heralding two strangers whom he had "picked up in Broadway," as he was going humming the Grandfather. Poor fellows, they looked used up, they hadn't eaten anything to-day. I hooked 'em along to give 'em their suppers, and I'm a goner to put in for their lodging with Mr. Taray's permission.

"Very good, Danny, and how much money have you in your purse?"

"I have seven dollars in the bank, only twenty-five cents out of it; but it is enough, I could not see the fellows hard up. They are strangers in the city, and cannot get along no how."

"You do this disinterestedly then, without any view to a reward?"

"Why you see," said the Professor, holding his hand perpendicularly upward, "and speaking as solemnly as Corporal Trim—if I don't get a reward here, I will above."

"Be to others kind and true,  
As you'd have others be to you—  
Never do, nor say to them,  
What they would not like again."

"I learned that out of a school book."

"And a very good adage it is, Danny—you practice the principle recommended."

"Well, I guess I don't lose nothing by it, after all. I had my dinner to eat four times to-day—when I have any one to feed, 'tis only a plate of fish or an oyster pie the less. I had a kind of pity like for the strangers—there's an other place of poetry about that, which Mr. Taray taught me. If I could only recollect it (correcting his head)."

"Bear this lesson in your mind,  
Be to others good and kind,  
When you mouth a stranger's pain,  
You are an angel entertained."

The Nassau coffee saloon is crowded with boys, when extras have sold well. The sooner they have met with a visible success, the more they are the jeweller of Debut, who wished, in this

vaunted room dedicated to silence, for the sound of the human voice, be transported by the power of the magician Bannabar, to the Newsboy's coffee-house, he would have enjoyed a full gratification.

On such an occasion, we visited the scene. It was with difficulty we could edge our way into a seat. Fatty was the Falstaff of the scene. He was like an Eldon, or representative of the fat knight, as he sat engrossing more space than could have been well spared, but fortunately his next neighbor was that attenuated young gent, Jack Randie [Paddy Moore].

Fatty's face was ruddy with good humor, and whether eating or not, his mouth was open, and teeth visible in a broad grin.

After he had, like the dragon of Wantley, devoured all before him, while waiting for another layer of good things, he amused himself by singing the burden of that good old Christmas carol—

"The wren, the wren, the king of all birds,  
St. Stephen's day was caught in the furze  
Although he's little, his family's great,  
Hurry up, waiter, give us a treat."

This last of course was an interpolation, not to be found in the original. Little Boech was counting his dimes, while he sipped his coffee, and "Goggle" looked unwellly fatigued, for while he ate his cake his head rested on the back of his chair, and his heels on the back of an opposite one, as if he were undergoing the operation of shaving. His attention was divided between his oyster pie, and cake, when he resumed his recumbent position, and the loving looks which he cast on them alternately, told, like hope, "a flattering tale." "How happy he could be with either." Then there was a gossip about the bombardment of some place, and a fight in another.

Yank had not been selling extras, yet he was in high spirits, he had been on an excursion, and had missed the extras, but had great fun he said. "We had some German fiddlers with us, and we got them on a hook in first rate style. Oh! didn't we quiz them?"

"Ah," said Cigars, "taking the silver in handfuls from his pocket, 'see what I have got, and Sebastopol' not taken yet. I had not a cent at two o'clock to-day, made all that on extras."

"Well, what is the news?"

"Oh! some fellow got whipt, and a fortress was taken, and some extras were bought."

"Tough the Newsboys do not appear to be influenced by any political principle in their opinions about the war in the Crimea, they debate the question of the siege of Sebastopol in their own way, very often."

"Say," said Barney, "with all the dignity of a captain among them. 'I do not go in for taking Sebastopol, extras mayn't sell afterwards d'ye see. Let the Russians get whipt, fellows, and then what will become of our trade?'"

"Well," said Cigars, "Sebastopol is taken, 'twill have another loss of the Arctic day of it—oh! wasn't that a time?"

"The last bombardment," said Fatty, "gave me three extra plates at the Nassau, and three shillings I paid as I owed."

Fatty thinks with Sancho Panza, that—  
"All's well as good,  
If they come with food."

How the Governor of Barrataria would have enjoyed a banquet at Nassau. "The death of Lord Raglan," said Roundheads, "wasn't worth an oyster pie."

"The Emperor Nick's was a better affair," said Fatty.

"Yes sir," said Paddy Moore, "let me see, the death of Emperor Nicholas put seventy-six cents for me in the Newsboy's bank at the Lodging House, and gave me a pair of pants as good as second hand."

"One battle," said the Yank, "is better than twenty deaths, and a blowing up of a ship and a fortress thrown in."

They discuss the merit of the viands after the feast. Cigars gives the palm to the pies, which are to him what venison pastry or tongue may be to the gourmand of the St. Nicholas Hotel.

The aromatic flavor of the tea and coffee the Yank declares is delicious, while Fatty is equally charmed with the fish pie.

The little waiter at the Nassau reminds me of Francis in one of Shakespeare's plays. Here he was assailed by a solemn, dark-complexioned personage—"Say, waiter, a fish-bowl here!"—from a corner where two Newsboys were dancing a "rigodon," with contortions of visage which would remind you of all Ovid's Metamorphoses—more than half a dozen voices, were, in various tones, calling on him for cakes, coffee, breakfast and oysters. He looked very much pained sometimes, but it was only for a moment, indeed.

Having satisfied our curiosity, and been thus diverted and initiated into the mysteries of the Nassau, we terminated our visit, and shall close this paper without further dissertation, as our premises have been more than fair proportion.

The Newsboys after leaving the Nassau, make haste to the lodging house, where the restlessness that is ingredient in the temper of the mind, is in the Newsboy directed rightly by the active spirit of benevolence which is there centered on and diffused over the interests of this interesting rank of existence, where the vice and ignorance which have disempowered, are in progress of dispossession from the strong hold of the young mind.

CREATABLE.—The people of the town of Medford, Massachusetts, having for some time been very much alarmed at the frequency of fires in their midst, came to the conclusion to offer a reward for the discovery of any person guilty of setting fire to a building. The Seligman accordingly offered five hundred dollars. A few days later four young men were arrested, charged with the offense. They all belonged to the Fire Department, and had been for a long time leagued together for the purpose of firing buildings, with no other object than calling out the Department and having a jolly time. They all confessed the crime with which they were charged. Previous to their arrest they had "borne" irreproachable characters.

He that has spent much of his time in his study will seldom be collected enough to think in a crowd, or confident enough to talk in one.

The following is a complete list of the apparatus, their size, &c., of the Brooklyn Fire Department, which will be found to be of interest to our readers here.

No. [Diameter of Chamber.] Strokes. [Builder] No. of Years [Style in service]

1.....8 inches.....9 inches.....Sickler, N.Y.....6.....Piano

2.....8 1/2 inches.....9 inches.....Jeffrey, R.I.....4.....do

3.....10 inches.....9 inches.....Smith, N.Y.....4.....do

4.....8 1/2 inches.....9 inches.....Jeffrey, R.I.....4.....do

5.....8 1/2 inches.....9 inches.....Smith, N.Y.....4.....do

6.....8 1/2 inches.....9 inches.....Sickler, N.Y.....4.....do

7.....8 1/2 inches.....9 inches.....Sickler, N.Y.....4.....do

8.....10 inches.....7 to 12 inches.....Jeffrey, R.I.....16 mo. Phila

9.....8 1/2 inches.....9 inches.....Toribos, N.Y.....6.....Piano

10.....8 1/2 inches.....9 inches.....Van Ness, N.Y.....5.....do

11.....8 inches.....8 1/2 inches.....Van Ness, N.Y.....5.....do

12.....8 inches.....16 inches.....Hanneman, Mass.....14 mo.

13.....9 inches.....7 to 14 inches.....Smith, N.Y.....5 mo. Phila

14.....8 1/2 inches.....9 inches.....Agnew, Phila.....5.....do

15.....8 1/2 inches.....9 inches.....Sickler, N.Y.....4.....Piano

16.....8 1/2 inches.....9 inches.....Smith, N.Y.....4.....do

17.....8 1/2 inches.....9 inches.....Smith, N.Y.....4.....do

18.....8 1/2 inches.....9 inches.....Sickler, N.Y.....4.....Piano

19.....10 inches.....9 inches.....Barton, N.Y.....4.....do

20.....6 1/2 inches.....9 inches.....Smith, N.Y.....5 mo. do

There was to be a grand trial of engines at the Crystal Palace, New York, on the 28th of October. Engines 8, 9, 11, 27, 28, 29 and 45, of New York, and 8 and 13, of Brooklyn, had entered for the contest. No. 8, of Brooklyn, tested their engine on the 11th of October, with the following result, manned by twenty-six men: Taking suction through 200 feet of New York hose, one inch nozzle, she threw on a level, 180 feet. Vigilant engine, of Brooklyn, was also tested, and threw 215 feet measuring the "drops" solid stream 192 feet. The Vigilant weighs 2,900 pounds.

The Fire Department of Brooklyn consists of a chief engineer and five assistants, twenty engines, seven hose companies, four hook and ladder companies, and one bucket company. No. 14 engine is the only one in the Department owned by the company. The Department is allowed seventeen hundred and fifteen men. At the present time the combined force consists of fourteen hundred and eighty-one men. There is in the Department seven thousand seven hundred feet of hose in good order, and five thousand three hundred feet ordinary—making a total of thirteen thousand six hundred feet. In a full complement for the Department would require 17,000 feet. The sources from which the Department obtains water are cisterns and the river.

The city is divided into two districts, the Eastern and Western. The latter, which is composed of the City of Brooklyn, [before its consolidation,] contains seventy-three cisterns, situated at convenient distances. The apparatus consisting of those mentioned above. The Eastern district comprises that which was formerly the City of Williamsburgh, Flatbush and Bushwick. In this district there are ten engine companies, and three hook and ladder companies. In the Eastern there are thirty-seven cisterns. The firemen of the Western district, besides their chief and assistants, have three fire wardens, a board of engineers and foremen, an exempt firemen's association, and officers of the Fire Department Fund, the trustees of which consist of the foremen of each company in the organization, and a member of the board of engineers. The firemen of the Eastern district have a board of representatives, board of trustees, exempt association, chief engineer and five assistants, board of officers and nine fire wardens. The Eastern district has four bell ringers, and the Western three.

[For the above we are indebted to a prominent member of the Brooklyn Fire Department, to whom we return our grateful acknowledgments for the information imparted.—Ed.]

**Springfield.**  
A grand trial of skill in playing took place at Springfield, Mass., on the 23rd of September. The prizes being \$800 and \$200 in cash. \$1,000 was contributed by the citizens. \$500 of which was paid the attendant expenses of the fete.

The following is a complete list of the companies taking part:

Ocean Hose company of Springfield, Philo A. Rockwell, foreman; uniform, red drab cloth shirts, black pants, leather fire hats; 82 men.

Fountain company of Shrewsbury, Bernard Harrington, foreman; 35 men; uniform, red flannel shirts, and black pants; Benjamin Joelyn of Worcester, maker of engine; six inch cylinder.

Washington company of Woburn, John J. Richardson, foreman; 48 men; uniform, plain red shirts and black pants; Howard & Davis of Boston, makers; 6 1/2 inch cylinder.

Hook company of Charlestown, S. O. Webster, foreman; 63 men; uniform, black pants, red shirts and leather fire caps; Hanneman machine, 4 1/2 inch cylinder.

Quinsigamond company of Shrewsbury, D. A. Nourse, foreman; 80 men; uniform, Scotch plaid shirts and black pants; Howard & Davis, makers, 6 1/2 inch cylinder.

Eagle company No. 1 of Springfield, Charles Woodman, foreman; 65 men, uniform, dark blue shirts and black pants. Button of Waterford, N. Y. maker, 9 1/2 inch cylinder.

Yale company of South Reading, W. H. Hayden, Jr., foreman, 64 men, William Jeffers of Pawtucket, R. I. maker, 10 inch cylinder, uniform, red jackets, black pants and red caps with blue and gilt stripes.

General Foster company of South Danvers, G. H. Tibbets, foreman, 47 men, uniform, red shirts, black pants and blue caps, Leley tub machine, 6 1/2 inch cylinder.

Fire King company of Rockville, Ct., W. B. Oront, foreman, 60 men, uniform, red shirts, white pants, and red caps with blue bands, James Smith of New York, maker, 8 inch cylinder.

Rippowam company of Stamford, Ct., Lorenzo Meeker, foreman, 40 men, uniform, red shirts with black trimmings, black pants and black hats, Button machine, 10 inch cylinder.

Marappa company of Brattleboro, Vt., J. H. Simonds, foreman, 64 men, uniform, blue jackets and black pants with white stripes, Thayer machine of Boston, 6 inch cylinder.

Neptune company of Hartford, E. A. Barker, foreman, 45 men, uniform, mixed brown suit with gilt trimmings, Hanneman machine of Boston, 8 inch cylinder.

Eagle company No. 1 of Greenfield, E. A. Reed, foreman, 45 men, uniform, red shirts with blue trimmings, black hats and black pants, Waterman machine, 8 inch cylinder.

American company of West Brookfield, G. S. Dewell, foreman, 46 men, uniform, red shirts with blue trimmings, and drab pants, Hanneman machine, 6 1/2 inch cylinder.

Niagara company of Springfield, Edward L. Sherman, foreman, 45 men, uniform, drab coats with blue trimmings, blue hats and black pants, Waterman machine, 8 inch cylinder.

Foreman company of Haydensville, Elijah H. Luce, foreman, 38 men, uniform, red coats, black pants and black hats, Button machine, 8 inch cylinder.

Hoppe company of Great Barrington, Frank Eddy, acting foreman, 48 men, uniform, red shirts black pants and blue caps with white lace, Button machine, 10 inch cylinder.

Mechanics' company of Holyoke, L. P. Bosworth, foreman, 35 men, uniform, green baize foremen and blue overalls, Howard & Davis, makers, Boston, 6 1/2 inch cylinder.

Catawac company of Springfield, James Coffman, foreman, 50 men, uniform, red shirts with blue trimmings, black hats and black pants, Waterman machine, 9 inch cylinder.

Phoenix company of Hartford, George Burnham, foreman, 50 men, uniform, red coats, black pants and blue hats, Waterman machine, 7 1/2 inch cylinder.

Rough and Ready company of Westfield, Andrew Campbell, foreman, 60 men, uniform, red jackets, sky blue pants with white stripes and dark blue cap; with white band, Button machine, 10 inch cylinder.

Deluge company of North Brookfield, George King, foreman, 40 men, uniform, red jackets with blue face, black pants with red stripe, and black cap, Jeffers machine, 9 1/2 inch cylinder.

Franklin company of Greenfield, H. S. Robbins, foreman, 34 men, uniform, red shirt and white pants, Button machine, (but not present).

Hook and Ladder company of Springfield, Sidney Ross, foreman, 30 men, uniform, red coats, black pants and black caps, Taylor & Crane of Springfield, makers, of carriages, &c.

Atlantic company of Chicopee, S. B. Fairbanks, foreman, 60 men, uniform, blue frock coats, black pants and red caps, Button machine, 9 inch cylinder.

Eagle Company, of Pittsfield, C. M. Wheldon; foreman; uniform, red shirts and black pants; Fulton machine; nine inch cylinder.

Bay State Company of Westfield, Henry Barrett, foreman; 40 men; uniform, red jackets, blue pants and dark blue caps; Button machine; nine inch cylinder.

These companies as they marched in procession were attended by thirteen bands of music, distributed throughout the line. After the companies had partaken of a dinner, they re-assembled for the grand trial.

In the middle of the lot, a pole with flag staff, 175 feet high, was prepared, plainly marked off by feet; and up this the several companies in turn, as decided by lot, played a stream of water in accordance with the following rules:

"Each company to draw their own water, and play through four hundred feet of hose—and such size pipe as they may select—perpendicularly, to a staff erected for the purpose. Time of trial, one minute—and not more than fifteen minutes will be allowed each company from the time of taking the reservoir to prepare for the trial; and in case the hose bursts, the company to withdraw without making another trial.

The judges appointed to determine the measure of each play were George Dwight, Edward Ingerson, E. Gunn, Jr., S. S. Day and H. M. Blanchard. They were stationed in the attic of the house to the left of the lot, commanding a clear view of the staff. They were ignorant of the names of the companies playing until after the awards of superiority.

We append a list of the engines and companies engaged in the trial, with the result of each play:—

**COMPANIES.** HEIGHT OF PLAY.

Phoenix of Hartford, 127 ft.

Eagle of Pittsfield, 100

Washington of Woburn, 105

Gen. Foster of South Danvers, 80

Rippowam of Stamford Ct., 109

Marappa of Brattleboro, Vt. (hose burst), 189

Hoppe of Great Barrington, 125

Yale of South Reading, (hose burst), 133

Collinsville co. of Ct. (hose burst), 10



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